



# Rendezvous Spring 2007–Winter 2008



Photo contributed by Ray Klaas



A park service historian once called national parks “Islands of Hope.” This description is truer now than ever. Voyageurs National Park is part of a vast system of waterways and forests that stretches from Lake Superior, across the Quetico, south to the Laurentian Divide, and west to Lake of the Woods and Winnipeg. The view from a satellite shows that this ancient and historic geography lies at the heart of the North American continent—and it is beautifully blue and green. This is not an accident. For more than a hundred years, advocates and visionaries on both sides of the U. S. - Canada border have struggled to protect the natural values of these wild lands.

Today a rich tapestry of publicly-owned protected areas preserves the natural, cultural, and recreational values of the region for all to enjoy. The geographic heart of this “heart of the continent” is defined by the linked boundaries of Voyageurs National Park, Superior National Forest and Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, and Quetico Park, Ontario.

The Superior National Forest and Quetico Park will celebrate their 100th Anniversaries in 2009. The National Park Service is already preparing for its Centennial in 2016. Look for special things to come both in the park and in cooperation with our partner park and national forest!

At the same time, our vital eco-region is threatened in new ways and needs new champions. This time the challenge demands more than a few dedicated groups and leaders—it is up to all of us. It is no secret that exotic species have wreaked

havoc with forests and waterways in the northeastern U. S. and that scientists and resources managers have struggled for years to preserve the Lake Superior fishery and watershed from invaders like the sea lamprey, zebra mussel, and rusty crayfish.

The spiny water flea, which appeared in the park’s large lakes in 2006, is the most recent invasive threat to park resources, and you can learn on page 3 how you can help prevent its spread. Although a changing climate and exotic species yet to come will alter the environment that generations have known here, Voyageurs National Park remains an Island of Hope. Because the park and adjoining waterways have been set aside as special natural areas, resources are available to perform research, develop best practices, and educate the public on the issues.

Regulation of public use, when necessary, can protect the qualities for which the park was established. At the same time, the history of resources protection and respectful use in the park and adjacent protected areas has helped preserve healthy and resilient systems to better adapt to changing conditions.

We invite you to join us in protecting the park while you enjoy it. Check your shoes and clothing for traveling weed seeds before you enter the park. Make sure your boat and motor are free of aquatic plants and hitchhiking creatures before you launch. Do swap out any lead in your tackle box for non-toxic alternatives. Read park regulations carefully. You will find many more suggestions on how to be a park-friendly visitor elsewhere in this newspaper.

All four seasons hold great beauty and opportunities for recreation and renewal in Voyageurs National Park. Welcome to your park! Come often, and stay until you know you will come back again.

Kate Miller, Park Superintendent



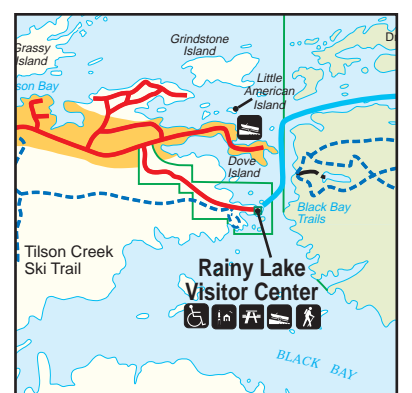
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